

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A connecting system, comprising:

an elongated element including a connecting member, the connecting member having an engaging portion; and

~~a substantially ring-shaped receiving element provided with~~ including an opening,  
~~wherein said elongated element can be connected, characterized in that the elongated element comprises a connecting member, and in that the ring-shaped element comprises an~~  
~~the opening being shaped configured to allow sliding passage of the elongated element with~~  
~~the connecting member in a specific~~ such that, with respect to a central axis of the elongated element, a shape of the engaging portion is aligned with a shape of the opening in a first angular position, whereby the connecting member passes through the opening, and in a second angular position different from the first angular position, interference exists between a surface of the engaging portion and a surface of the receiving element thereby preventing the connecting member from passing through the opening.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the engaging portion of the connecting member comprises two ~~includes one~~ or more of indentations ~~and/or~~ and protrusions.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to claim 1 ~~[[or 2]]~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the engaging portion of the connecting member comprises includes at least a pair of opposed indentations and/or protrusions.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims claim 1~~ ~~[[ - 3 ]]~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the engaging portion of the connecting member ~~comprises~~ includes two or more pairs of indentations and/or protrusions formed in spaced-apart relationship on the elongated element.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims claim 3~~ ~~[[ 1 - 4 ]]~~, ~~characterized in that the indentations and/or protrusions of the respective pairs may be~~ wherein the at least a pair of opposed indentations and/or protrusions are arranged in staggered relationship ~~round~~ around the elongated element at alternating angular positions.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims claim 2~~ ~~[[ 1 - 5 ]]~~, ~~characterized in that said indentations and/or protrusions are material portions of the elongated element that have been~~ wherein the one of an indentation and protrusion is formed by upsetting or flattening.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims claim 1~~ ~~[[ - 6 ]]~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ring-shaped receiving element ~~comprises~~ includes clamping means for clamping onto the elongated element.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to claim 7, ~~characterized in that said~~ wherein the clamping means are configured to clamp around the connecting member.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to claim 7 or 8, ~~characterized in that said~~ wherein the clamping means ~~are suitable~~ is configured for clamping down ~~in said~~ on indentations.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims~~ claim 7 ~~[[ - 9]]~~, ~~characterized in that said~~ wherein the clamping means ~~comprise~~ is springing ears.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims~~ claim 7 ~~[[ - 10]]~~, ~~characterized in that said~~ wherein the clamping means ~~comprise~~ includes notches, ~~such that to be supported on~~ the elongated element is adjacent to the notches after passing through the opening.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims~~ claim 1 ~~[[ - 11]]~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the connecting member is ~~present at a specific location, which may or may not be at the~~ proximate to an end of the elongated element.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method for connecting and disconnecting ~~[[the]]~~ elements of ~~[[the]]~~ a connecting system, ~~comprising: according to any one of the claims 1—12, characterized in that~~

aligning an ~~[[the]]~~ elongated element and ~~the ring-shaped~~ a receiving element ~~are turned over a certain~~ at an angle relative to each other, such that in a first angular position, a shape of an engaging portion of a connecting member aligns with a shape of an opening of

the receiving element, and in a second angular position different from the first angular position, the shape of the engaging portion interferes with the shape of the opening; and  
performing one of pushing the elements together or pulling the elements apart in that  
the two elements while in a fixed the first angular position are slidingly pushed together or  
pulled apart respectively such that the engaging portion passes through the opening.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): ~~[[A]]~~ The method according to claim 13,  
~~characterized in that the elongated element and the ring shaped element are repeatedly turned~~  
~~over a certain angle relative to each other, and in that the two elements while in given angular~~  
~~positions are repeatedly pushed together or pulled apart from one another~~ further comprising:  
repeating the aligning such that a subsequent engaging portion of the connecting  
member aligns with the opening, wherein the subsequent engaging portion is substantially  
similar in shape as the engaging portion and at least one subsequent engaging portion nearest  
to the engaging portion is disposed at an angle different from a position of the engaging  
portion; and  
repeating the performing one of pushing the elements together or pulling the elements  
apart, such that the subsequent engaging portion passes through the opening.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An earring, ~~characterized in that the earring~~  
~~comprises~~ comprising:

a connecting system according to any one of the claims claim 1 [[- 12]], comprising  
wherein the elongated element is a shank element and the receiving element is a sliding  
element, which can be connected, wherein said shank element comprises a connecting  
member, and the sliding element comprises an opening having a shape such as to allow which

allows sliding passage of the shank element with the connecting member in a ~~specific turned~~  
an angular position.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A suspension system for objects, using ~~Use of the~~  
connecting system according to ~~any one of the claims claim 1 [[- 12]] by carrying out the~~  
~~method according to claim 13 or 14 in a suspension system for objects,~~ in which the objects  
are suspended from a ceiling, ~~for example.~~

Claims 17-18 (Canceled)

Claim 19 (New): The connecting system according to claim 1, wherein the receiving  
element is substantially ring-shaped.

Claim 20 (New): The connecting system according to claim 1, wherein the shape of  
the engaging portion and the shape of the opening is substantially ovular.